

Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1995



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Overview of State-Sponsored Terrorism

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The United States and its allies continue to focus on raising the costs for governments that support, tolerate, and engage in international terrorism. It is widely recognized that state support for terrorist groups enhances their capabilities and makes law enforcement efforts to counter terrorism more difficult. To pressure states to stop such support, US law imposes trade and other restrictions on countries determined by the Secretary of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism by supporting, training, supplying, or providing safehaven to known terrorists. The United States currently lists Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria as state supporters of terrorism. The list is sent annually to Congress, although countries can be added or removed at any time circumstances warrant.

Cuba no longer is able to actively support armed struggle in Latin America or other parts of the world because of severe ongoing economic problems. While there was no direct evidence of its sponsorship of terrorist acts in 1995, the Cuban Government continued to provide safehaven for several international terrorists. Cuba has not renounced political support for groups that engage in international terrorism.

Iran continued in 1995 to be the world's most active supporter of international terrorism. Although Tehran tried to project a moderate image in the West, it continued to assassinate dissidents abroad and maintained its support and financing of groups that pose a threat to US citizens. Iranian authorities reaffirmed the validity of the death sentence imposed on British author Salman Rushdie, although some Iranian officials claimed that the Government of Iran would not implement the fatwa. No specific acts of terrorism attributed to the Iranian-backed Lebanese Hizballah in 1995 were on the scale of the July 1994 bombing of a Jewish cultural center in Buenos Aires, which is believed to have been perpetrated by Hizballah. Hizballah continued attempts to undermine the Middle East peace process and oppose Western interests throughout the Middle East. Iran also supports other radical organizations that commit terrorism in opposition to the peace process, including HAMAS, the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC). It also provides safehaven to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a terrorist group fighting for an independent Kurdish state that carried out numerous terrorist acts in 1995 against Turkish interests.

During 1995 several acts of political violence in northern Iraq matched Baghdad's pattern of using terrorism against the local population and regime defectors. These included a bombing attack on the Iraqi National Congress and the poisoning of a number of regime defectors. Iraq continues to provide a safehaven for various terrorist groups.

Libya continued for another year its defiance of the demands of UN Security Council Resolutions adopted in response to its involvement in the bombings of Pan Am flight 103 (1988) and UTA flight 772 (1989). These resolutions demand that Libya turn over for trial the two intelligence agents indicted for the PA 103 bombing, cooperate with US, UK, and French authorities in investigating the Pan Am and UTA bombings, pay compensation to victims, and cease all support for terrorism. Instead, Libya continued to foster disingenuous "compromises" aimed at diluting or evading the resolutions. It also continued hosting terrorist groups like the Abu Nidal organization (ANO). Further, an investigation into the murder of PIJ leader Fathi Shaqaqi in Malta in October 1995 revealed that he had long been a Libyan client. Tripoli also continued to harass and intimidate the Libyan exile community; it is believed to be responsible for the abduction of US resident Mansur Kikha in December 1993 and was blamed by Libyan exiles for the murder of a Libyan oppositionist in London in November 1995. The Libyan charge in London was expelled in 1995 for threatening and surveilling Libyan exiles in the United Kingdom.

North Korea (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or DPRK) is not known to have sponsored any terrorist acts since 1987. Since 1993 the DPRK has made several efforts to reiterate a stated position of opposition to all forms of international terrorism. The DPRK Government since 1970 has provided safehaven to

several members of the Japanese Communist League-Red Army Faction, who participated in an aircraft hijacking in 1970.

Sudan came into sharper focus in 1995 as a center of international terrorist activities. By year's end it was at odds with many of its neighbors. Uganda and Eritrea had severed diplomatic relations with Khartoum because of its support of armed opposition groups in those countries. Ethiopia and Egypt accused Sudan of complicity in one of the year's highest profile terrorist crimes, the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa on 26 June, attributed to the Egyptian al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya (Islamic Group or IG). Surviving assailants captured by Ethiopian police incriminated the Sudanese Government, which is dominated by the National Islamic Front (NIF), in planning the crime and training the assailants. Three conspirators are believed to be in Sudan. When Khartoum refused to cooperate in apprehending them, the Organization for African Unity (OAU) called for Sudan to hand over the suspects. In addition, Sudan continues to harbor Usama Bin Ladin, a major financier of terrorism, and members of some of the world's most violent groups like the IG, ANO, Lebanese Hizballah and HAMAS. Khartoum is a major transit point and base for a number of terrorist groups.

There is no evidence that Syrian officials have been directly involved in planning or executing terrorist attacks since 1986. Nevertheless, Syria continues to provide safehaven and support inside Syria and in areas of Lebanon under Syrian control for terrorist groups such as Ahmad Jibril's PFLP-GC, HAMAS, Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), the Japanese Red Army, and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Syria has permitted Iranian resupply of Hizballah via Damascus but continues to restrain the international activities of some of these groups.

Cuba

Cuba no longer actively supports armed struggle in Latin America and other parts of the world. In earlier years, the Castro regime provided significant levels of military training, weapons, funding, and guidance to leftist extremists worldwide. Havana's focus now is to forestall an economic collapse; the government actively continued to seek the upgrading of diplomatic and trade relations with other nations.

Cuba is not known to have sponsored any international terrorist incidents in 1995. Havana, however, provided safehaven to several terrorists in Cuba during the year. A number of Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) terrorists, who sought sanctuary in Cuba several years ago, still live on the island. Members of a few Latin American terrorist organizations and US fugitives also reside in Cuba.

Iran

Iran remains the premier state sponsor of international terrorism and is deeply involved in the planning and execution of terrorist acts both by its own agents and by surrogate groups. This year Tehran escalated its assassination campaign against dissidents living abroad; there were seven confirmed Iranian murders of dissidents in 1995, compared with four in 1994. Iranian antidissident operations concentrated on the regime's main opposition group, the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK), and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI).

Leaders of Iranian dissident groups are the most frequent victims of Iranian intelligence and terrorist operations. In 1995 most antidissident attacks were conducted in Iraq, in contrast to prior years' worldwide operations. Attacks on Iranian dissidents in Iraq during the year included the shooting deaths on 17 May of two MEK members in Baghdad, the murder on 5 June of two members of the Iranian Kurdish "Toilers" Party (Komelah) in Sulaymaniyah, and the killing of three MEK members in Baghdad on 10 July. The shooting death in Paris on 17 September of Hashem Abdollahi, son of the chief witness in the trial of 1994 that convicted two Iranians for murdering former Iranian Prime Minister Bakhtiar in 1991, may have been an antidissident attack.

Sendar Hosseini, a suspect in the 1994 murder of dissident Osman Muhammed Amini in Copenhagen, Denmark, was arrested by Italian police in Bibione, Italy.

Iran provides arms, training, and money to Lebanese Hizballah and several Palestinian extremist groups that use terrorism to oppose the Middle East peace process. Tehran, which is against any compromise with or recognition of Israel, continued in 1995 to encourage Hizballah, HAMAS, the PIJ, the PFLP-GC, and other Palestinian rejectionist groups to form a coordinated front to resist Israel and the peace process through violence and terrorism.

Hizballah, Iran's closest client, remains the leading suspect in the July 1994 bombing of the Argentine-Israel Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires that killed at least 96 persons. This operation was virtually

identical to the one conducted in March 1992 against the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, for which Hizballah claimed responsibility.

Iran also gives varying degrees of assistance to an assortment of radical Islamic and secular groups from North Africa to Central Asia. For example, Tehran continued to offer the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) safehaven in Iran. Seeking to establish a Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey, the PKK in 1995 launched numerous attacks in Europe and continued its violent campaign against Turkish tourism, including attacks on tourist spots frequented by Westerners. Tehran also provided some support to Turkish Islamic groups that have been blamed for attacks against Turkish secular and Jewish figures.

Iranian authorities reaffirmed the validity of the death sentence imposed on British author Salman Rushdie, although some Iranian officials claimed that the Government of Iran would not implement the fatwa. Tehran, however, continued to mount a propaganda campaign against Rushdie. In February the sixth anniversary of the judgment, Iran's official news agency IRNA reported that Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmoud Vaezi "underlined the need for the implementation of the fatwa against the author of the blasphemous book *The Satanic Verses*." Vaezi in May declared that "the fatwa issued by the late Imam [Khomeini] could neither be revoked nor changed by anybody."

Despite increasing Iranian support for extremist groups and involvement in terrorist operations, President Rafsanjani continued to project publicly a "moderate" image of Iran to Western European countries and Japan to facilitate the expansion of its relations with them. This quest for respectability probably explains why Iran reduced its attacks in Europe last year; Tehran wants to ensure access to Western capital and markets.

Iran continued to view the United States as its principal foreign adversary, supporting groups such as Hizballah that pose a threat to US citizens. Because of Tehran's and Hizballah's deep antipathy toward the United States, US missions and personnel abroad continue to be at risk.

Iraq

During 1995 several acts of political violence in northern Iraq matched Baghdad's pattern of using terrorism against the local population and regime defectors. Although Iraq's terrorist infrastructure has not recovered from the blows it suffered during the Gulf war, Baghdad has taken measures to restore its terrorist options.

Iraq remains far from compliance with UN resolutions that require it to cease internal repression and support for terrorism. Iraqi-sponsored terrorism has been commonplace in northern Iraq, where the regime is responsible for more than 100 attacks on UN and relief agency personnel and aid convoys over the past several years. In 1995 there were a number of acts of political violence for which Baghdad is a suspect. For example, a blast on 9 November at the security office in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq of the opposition Iraqi National Congress (INC) killed at least 25 persons. The INC has been targeted before by the regime in Baghdad.

Early in the year, a number of Iraqi oppositionists in northern Iraq were poisoned by thallium. At least one survived and was treated in a British hospital. The British Government confirmed that he was a victim of a regime assassination attempt.

In October, the British Government expelled an officer of the Iraqi Interests Section in London for engaging in "activities incompatible with his diplomatic status." The London-based Iraqi opposition reported that the official concerned was an employee of the Iraqi intelligence services who was responsible for targeting Iraqi exiles for attack.

On 20 January a US District Court in California awarded \$1.5 million to Dr. Sargon Dadesho, an Iraqi oppositionist living in the United States who had brought suit against the Iraqi regime. The court concluded that the Iraqi Government was involved in a 1990 plot to assassinate Dadesho. This is the only time such a judgment on Iraq's terrorist activities has been reached in a US court. In other court action, a Kuwaiti appeals court on 20 March confirmed the death sentences against two Iraqis convicted of involvement in the plot in 1993 to assassinate President George Bush, while converting to prison terms the death sentences meted out to four others by a lower court.

Iraq continues to provide haven and training facilities for several terrorist clients. Abu Abbas' Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) maintains its headquarters in Baghdad. The Abu Nidal organization (ANO) continues to have an office in Baghdad. The Arab Liberation Front (ALF), headquartered in Baghdad, continues to receive funding from Saddam's regime. Iraq also continues to host the former head of the now-defunct 15 May organization, Abu Ibrahim, who masterminded several bombings of US aircraft. A terrorist group opposed to

the current Iranian regime, the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK), still is based in Iraq and has carried out several violent attacks in Iran from bases in Iraq.

Libya

The end of 1995 marked the fourth year of the Libyan regime's refusal to comply with the demands of UN Security Council Resolution 731. This measure was adopted following the indictments in November 1991 of two Libyan intelligence agents for the bombing in 1988 of Pan Am Flight 103. UNSCR 731 endorsed US, British, and French demands that Libya turn over the two Libyan bombing suspects for trial in the United States or the United Kingdom, pay compensation to the victims, cooperate with US, UK, and French authorities in the investigations into the Pan Am 103 and UTA flight 772 bombings, and cease all support for terrorism.

UN Security Council Resolution 748 was adopted in April 1992 as a result of Libya's refusal to comply with UNSCR 731. UNSCR 748 imposed sanctions that embargoed Libya's civil aviation and military procurement efforts and required all states to reduce Libya's diplomatic presence. UNSCR 883 adopted in November 1993, imposed additional sanctions against Libya for its continued refusal to comply with UNSC demands. UNSCR 883 included a limited assets freeze and oil technology ban, and it also strengthened existing sanctions.

By the end of 1995, the Libyan regime had yet to comply in full with the UNSC demands. Although British authorities were satisfied that Libya had provided sufficient information on its past sponsorship of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), Tripoli had failed to meet any of the other UNSC demands. Most significantly, it still refused to turn over for trial in the United States or the United Kingdom the two Libyan agents indicted for the Pan Am 103 bombing.

Throughout 1995, the Libyan regime continued to support groups violently opposed to the Middle East peace process, some of which engage in acts of international terrorism. After the murder of Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) leader Fathi Shaqaqi in Malta in October 1995, it was revealed that Libya had frequently facilitated his travel. Libya also continued to sponsor meetings of the Palestinian rejectionist groups in Tripoli.

Despite the ongoing sanctions against Libya for its sponsorship of terrorism, Tripoli continued to harass and intimidate the Libyan expatriate dissident community in 1995. Libya is widely believed to be responsible for the abduction in 1993 and continued detention of prominent Libyan dissident and human rights activist Mansur Kikhia. In November 1995 a Libyan dissident resident in London was brutally murdered; the Libyan expatriate community accused Tripoli of involvement in his death. British authorities continued to investigate the case as the year ended. They also expelled the Libyan charge in London for engaging in "activities incompatible with his diplomatic status." The charge was accused of being involved in intimidation and surveillance of Libyan dissidents in the United Kingdom.

North Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea) is not known to have sponsored any international terrorist attacks since 1987, when it conducted the midflight bombing of a KAL airliner, killing all 115 persons aboard. A North Korean spokesman in November stated that the DPRK opposed "all kinds of terrorism" and "any assistance to it." North Korea, however, continued to provide political sanctuary to members of the Japanese Communist League-Red Army Faction who hijacked a Japanese Airlines flight to North Korea in 1970.

Sudan

Sudan continued to serve as a refuge, nexus, and training hub in 1995 for a number of international terrorist organizations, primarily of Middle Eastern origin. The Sudanese Government, which is dominated by the National Islamic Front (NIF), also condoned many of the activities of Iran and the Khartoum-based Usama Bin Ladin, a private financier of terrorism. Khartoum permitted the funneling of assistance to terrorist and radical Islamist groups operating in and transiting Sudan.

Since Sudan was placed on the US Government's official list of State Sponsors of Terrorism in August 1993, the Sudanese Government has continued to harbor members of some of the world's most violent organizations: the Abu Nidal organization (ANO), Lebanese Hizballah, the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Egypt's al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya (Islamic Group or IG), and the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS). The NIF also supports Islamic and non-Islamic opposition groups in Uganda, Tunisia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Eritrea.

Uganda severed diplomatic relations with Sudan in April, citing the inappropriate activities of representatives of

the Sudanese Embassy in Kampala. The Government of Uganda said it found these activities threatening to its security.

Both Ethiopia and Egypt accused Sudan's security services of providing direct assistance to the IG for the attempt on the life of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa on 26 June. Three surviving assailants captured by Ethiopian police provided incriminating information about Sudan's role. Sudanese help to the IG included supplying travel documents and weapons and harboring key planners of the operation.

Despite a private plea by the Ethiopian Government, the Sudanese regime did not act on Ethiopia's request for the extradition of three Egyptian suspects involved in the Mubarak assassination attempt, claiming it was unable to locate them. Those being sought included the operation's mastermindûresident in Khartoumûhis assistant, and a surviving member of the assassination team. (After the attack misfired, this last individual fled from Addis Ababa to Sudan on Sudan Airlines using a Sudanese passport.) In rare actions against a member state, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 11 September and again on 19 December called on Sudan to extradite the three IG suspects believed to have been involved in the assassination attempt and to stop aiding terrorism.

In an apparent attempt at damage control not long after the assassination attempt, President Bashir removed the head of Sudan's security services and proclaimed a new visa policy requiring Arab foreigners to obtain visas to enter Sudan. The policy did not apply to citizens from three state sponsors of terrorismûIraq, Libya, and Syriaûhowever, because of bilateral agreements.

Khartoum also permitted Usama Bin Ladin, a denaturalized Saudi citizen with mujahedin contacts, to use Sudan as a shelter for his radical Muslim followers and to finance and train militant groups. Bin Ladin, who lives in Khartoum and owns numerous business enterprises in Sudan, has been linked to numerous terrorist organizations. He directs funding and other logistic support through his companies to a number of extremist causes.

A Sudanese national, who pleaded guilty in February 1995 to various charges of complicity in the New York City bomb plots foiled by the Federal Bureau Investigation, alleged that a member of the Sudanese UN Mission had offered to facilitate access to the UN building in pursuance of the bombing plot. The Sudanese official also is said to have had full knowledge of other bombing targets.

Sudan's support to terrorist organizations has included paramilitary training, indoctrination, money, travel documentation, safe passage, and refuge in Sudan. Most of the organizations present in Sudan maintain offices or other types of representation. They use Sudan as a base to organize some of their operations and to support compatriots elsewhere. Sudan also serves as a secure transit point and meeting place for several Iranian-backed terrorist groups.

Syria

There is no evidence that Syrian officials have been directly involved in planning or executing terrorist attacks since 1986. Damascus continues to negotiate seriously to achieve a peace accord with Israel and has taken some steps to restrain the international activities of these groups. Syria continues to use its influence to moderate Hizballah and Palestinian rejectionist groups when tension and violence in southern Lebanon escalate. It has, however, allowed Iran to resupply Hizballah via Damascus.

At the same time, Syria provides safehaven and support for several groups that engage in international terrorism. Spokesmen for some of these groups, particularly Palestinian rejectionists, continue to claim responsibility for attacks in Israel and the occupied territories/Palestinian autonomous areas. Several radical terrorist groups maintain training camps or other facilities on Syrian territory and in Syrian-controlled areas of Lebanon, such as Ahmad Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of PalestineûGeneral Command (PFLP-GC), which has its headquarters near Damascus. Syria grants basing privileges or refuge to a wide variety of groups engaged in terrorism. These include HAMAS, the PFLP-GC, the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the Japanese Red Army (JRA).

The terrorist group Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) continues to train in the Al Biqa' (Bekaa Valley), and its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, resides at least part-time in Syria. The PKK in 1995 conductedûwith limited successûa violent campaign against Turkish tourist spots frequented by foreigners, as well as other terrorist violence in Europe. Syrian safehaven for PKK operations was vigorously protested by Turkey and is the subject of discussions between Syria and Turkey.

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